

Stonehouse Local Place Plan

Our Place
Our Future



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Stonehouse is a growing rural village situated in the heart of South Lanarkshire. The Village is situated on the Avon Water in an area of natural beauty and historical interest, near to the Clyde Valley. We have a very active local community with a wide range of groups and organisations, and people supporting one another.



This Local Place Plan provides an opportunity to build on our strengths and address some of the specific challenges we face. Stonehouse has been neglected in previous Local Plans over many years with no vision coming from local government nor any funding being given for infrastructure which is necessary for an expanding village.

We have secured funding from OnPath Energy (KMCP) to enable us to engage Community Enterprise in establishing a Place Plan to promote the village of Stonehouse in the next Local Plan and to help to access funding for projects to improve our village life.

The Plan has taken in a wide range of views which will feed through to improve and maintain the assets we have and to enable discussion with politicians on what is required from investment for infrastructure from local and national government to make our village a safer and enjoyable place to live and grow families.

Working with the people from Community Enterprise has been an enjoyable and challenging experience. They have coordinated the plan and put an enormous amount of time into visiting our village on numerous occasions to meet and speak with people.

There are many great organisations in our village who maintain and sustain our village life. They provide entertainment for senior citizens, engage our children in performing arts, guides and scouts, boys and girls brigade while others look after sports activities and keeping the villagers fit and healthy.

We trust that this plan will help us to engage all of the appropriate people in making our village a great place to stay.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who participated with Community Enterprise and gave of their time and their opinions in what we need for our village.

George Smith

Stonehouse Community Council
Chair of KMCP Windfarm Group

Introduction

01

Our Vision for Stonehouse

The idea of a specific geographical place being important and having control of its facilities and services has been an important direction of travel for Scotland and the “place principle” was adopted in 2018. As part of this way of thinking, the National Planning Framework 4 was enacted in February 2023.

This gives communities the right to feed into the planning system with ideas, and the right to influence policy. Rather than the local authority having sole responsibility, it gives communities like Stonehouse, the opportunity to get its people to drive change from the bottom up.

The Local Place Plan will be submitted to South Lanarkshire Council and will influence the development of its next Local Development Plan. The plan will identify what should happen in each community and where it should happen.

However, the focus of a Place Plan is not restricted to South Lanarkshire Council's planning concerns. Some of the themes and project ideas included here will be the responsibility of the community itself.

With a Local Place Plan registered and verified, the people of Stonehouse, will be able to influence and drive developments in the area and to give a platform to the community to voice their own aspirations for the area.

Our Place Plan sets out an ambitious ten-year vision for Stonehouse.

02

2.1 Our Vision

Stonehouse will be a friendly, welcoming, vibrant and well-connected village offering a great quality of life for those who live here. We will have a range of community facilities, amenities and thriving local businesses.

2.2 Our Investment Themes

The Place Plan process has identified five core thematic areas that will underpin and support the achievement of the vision. These are:

- 1. Amenities, Facilities and Services
- 2. Connectivity and Transport
- 3. Leisure and Play
- 4. Business and Enterprise
- 5. Environment and Greenspace

2.3 Strategic Objectives

Directly aligned to the investment themes, Stonehouse has five core strategic objectives with the specific purpose of setting out what the community of Stonehouse wants to achieve over the next 10 years. These are:

Theme 1: Amenities, Facilities and Services

Strategic Objective: Stonehouse will be a desirable place to live with amenities, facilities and services for all.

Theme 2: Connectivity and Transport

Strategic Objective: Stonehouse will be a well-connected place with a range of transport options and safe roads.

Theme 3: Leisure and Play

Strategic Objective: Stonehouse will be a vibrant and exciting place, with plenty of opportunities for play and leisure locally.

Theme 4: Business and Enterprise

Strategic Objective: Stonehouse will be an entrepreneurial place, which encourages and supports local business and retail.

Theme 5: Environment and Greenspace

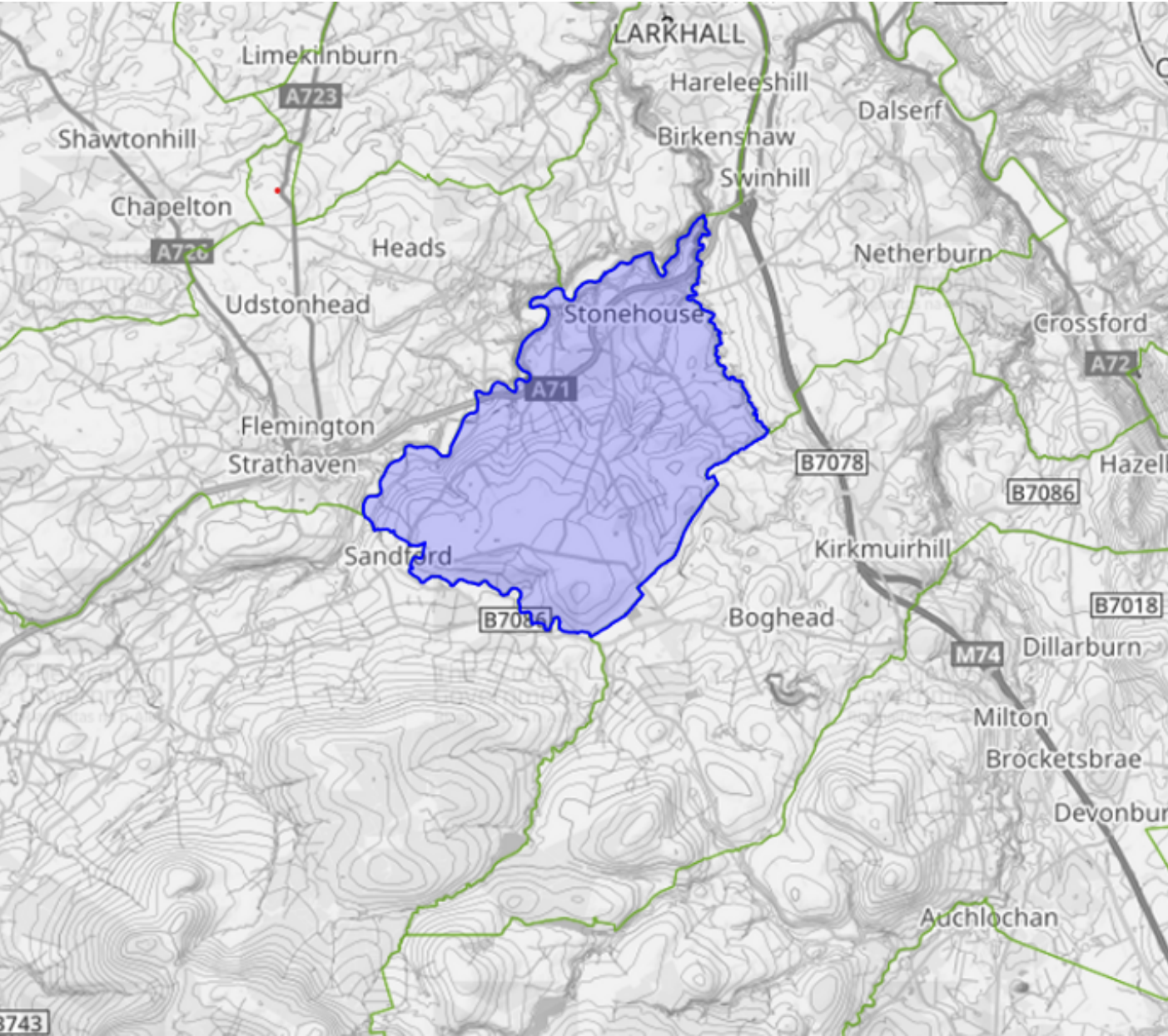
Strategic Objective: Stonehouse will be a beautiful, rural village which values and protects its natural environment and green spaces, ensuring they are accessible to all.



2.4 Boundary Map

Stonehouse is a rural village/small town in South Lanarkshire, located in the heart of rural Lanarkshire. It is on Avon Water in an area of natural beauty and historical interest, near to the Clyde Valley. It is situated on the A71 trunk road between Edinburgh and Kilmarnock, near the towns of Hamilton, Larkhall and Strathaven. The population of Stonehouse (Civil Parish, Census 2022) is 6,090.

The area used for the purposes of this report and research is the Stonehouse Community Council area (shown on the map below), which includes the town of Stonehouse and surrounding rural area, which is included as a Stonehouse data zone (SIMD 2020).



Our Challenges and Needs

03

3.1 Population Growth

The Stonehouse population is growing. The Stonehouse population has grown by 9% between 2001 and 2021, which is higher than the average South Lanarkshire population growth (+6%) and the national average for population growth (+8%). As Stonehouse is a relatively affordable place to live overall with 30% of homes in the most affordable council tax bands (10% above national average), and with planned house building in the area, the population is likely to continue to grow. It is important that the facilities and services available in the community keep up with this population growth.

The community told us that to grow sustainably, there needs to be a good mix of housing types including social housing, affordable houses for families looking to move to the area and smaller homes for retired people looking to downsize. To support the growing population of families and young people, local people told us they want to see a High School for Stonehouse, as pupils currently travel to Strathaven and Larkhall to attend High School.

3.2 Facilities and Services

As a part of the community consultation, we used survey responses to conduct a place standard assessment for Stonehouse. The lowest scoring category was facilities and services which were rated as poor with an average score of 3 out of 7.

There is a desire to develop the availability and accessibility of community facilities within Stonehouse. The primary community facility in Stonehouse is Lifestyles which is owned and managed by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture. While many people feel that Lifestyles is a great asset for the community, they also observed that it is underutilised. There is demand locally for more community-based facilities at the other end of the town.

94% of survey respondents told us that they would like to see an improved selection of shops in the village centre. Young people from primary to high school age also told us they would like to see better shops and places to eat in the village. The small number of shops and amenities in the town centre, mean that most residents are travelling out with the community to do their shopping, to eat out and socialise. As a result, people aren't spending their money locally in Stonehouse, which has a negative impact on the local economy.

3.3 Public Transport

While new bus links to Glasgow are valued and should be protected, internal public transport connections within South Lanarkshire are reported to be poor. 14% of survey respondents listed public transport as one of the top challenges relating to life in Stonehouse. As Stonehouse is a rural community, where 21% of households do not own a car, local public transport links are vital to local people and the economy.

The speed of traffic coming through the village is a concern to many, especially those who have limited mobility or younger children. This was raised as a major concern in family orientated consultation sessions.

Local people told us they would like to see safe walking and cycling routes (accessible for all including families) that link Stonehouse up to neighbouring villages/towns such as Blackwood. This will offer sustainable and environmentally friendly options for those travelling and commuting to nearby towns.

3.4 Leisure and Play Opportunities

Parks, outdoor leisure, and play areas emerged as top priorities in the community survey and during face-to-face consultations, with 33% of respondents rating Stonehouse poorly as a 'place to play.' When asked what they would like to change about Stonehouse, primary school aged children told us they would like to see improved parks and more places for activities and sport.

While the Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park is a cherished community asset which should be protected, many residents expressed a strong desire for an additional play park near LifeStyles to accommodate the growing number of families moving into new housing developments at this end of the village.

82% of survey respondents said they would like to see a gym in the village and young people told us they would like to see more and better outdoor sports facilities.

The TileWorks sports ground is set to become a community owned sports and recreation facility following a Community Asset Transfer from South Lanarkshire Council to Royal Albert FC. Additionally, there is significant community interest in establishing a high-quality local gym to enhance the village's leisure offerings.

Residents also value their connection to the countryside but emphasised the need for more accessible walking routes that allow them to enjoy nature without relying on roadways. More accessible paths following the river Avon were requested by all age groups, showing a desire to explore the surrounding greenspace on foot.

3.5 The Local Economy

The place standard assessment (based on results of the community consultation) revealed that business and local economy was the joint lowest rated aspect of life in Stonehouse (along with facilities and services), with an average score of 3 out of 5. Only 26% of survey respondents rated Stonehouse highly as a place to work.

Stonehouse faces challenges relating to the local economy due to a limited of shopping and dining options within the village. With few opportunities to spend money locally, residents are increasingly traveling to other areas to meet their needs, which only exacerbates the problem. This trend makes it harder for existing businesses to thrive and discourages new ventures from opening.

The growing population in Stonehouse underscores the need to revitalise the local economy. Existing residents are eager for more options and opportunities to spend their money locally, and there's a clear demand for initiatives that can stimulate economic growth and create opportunities for work and entrepreneurship.

3.6 Access to Greenspace

Stonehouse is fortunate to have a beautiful rural environment that residents deeply value and want to protect. Under the place standard indicators, the community rated Natural Space as the most positive aspect of life in Stonehouse with an average rating of 6 out of 7.

However, the community consultation highlighted concerns about village upkeep, emphasising the importance of maintaining a litter-free and well-kept environment. Residents also cherish the surrounding countryside and green belt and want more and better opportunities to access rural spaces using safer and more accessible walking routes, particularly those that avoid busy roads, making them suitable for families with children.

Interventions and Investments



Themes and long list of projects

The responses and engagement with the community, groups and organisations in Stonehouse have helped us identify the challenges faced by the community, and the actions we should undertake to work towards achieving that vision.

They require combinations of actions by South Lanarkshire Council and partnership working with other agencies such as South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture, by local organisations and the community itself. In most areas funding will need to be secured to deliver these actions. In some instances, further feasibility studies are required to see whether and how ideas are viable and new community groups will need to be established to take ideas and projects forwards.

Theme 1: Amenities, Facilities and Services

Stonehouse will be a desirable place to live with amenities, facilities and services for all.

With a growing population and continuous housebuilding, Stonehouse is set to expand further. It's crucial that this growth is sustainable, ensuring that the community has access to the necessary facilities and services. Currently, Stonehouse remains an affordable place to live, and we aim to maintain this by ensuring new developments offer a diverse mix of housing options.

We are committed to making Stonehouse a desirable place to live, recognising that the ongoing improvement and maintenance of the Village Centre is vital to achieving this goal. The centre of Stonehouse is a dedicated conservation area and consultation showed that local people want to maintain and raise the quality of the built environment for the benefit of the community and visitors.

Projects

- 1.1 Encourage increased use of the existing Lifestyle's centre by exploring possibilities with South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture for price discounts for community use.
- 1.2 Development of new community facilities at the bottom of the village, including the Park Pavilion and other vacant premises.
- 1.3 Initiate a partnership between the community, local business and South Lanarkshire Council to improve the appearance of the town centre.
- 1.4 Work with South Lanarkshire Council housing to ensure there is a good mix of housing types in new developments including social housing and affordable housing for families in the village.
- 1.5 Continue to lobby for a new high school for Stonehouse in the longer term to support the sustainable growth of the village.

Theme 2: Connectivity and Transport

Stonehouse will be a well-connected place with a range of transport options and safe roads for all.

We will consider how public transport options could better meet the gaps in public transport and connect neighbourhoods in the surrounding area. In the longer term, we will seek to develop a safe path and cycle way infrastructure which will make it easier for people to get around using active travel. The community have told us that road safety in the village is a growing concern, and we will continue to campaign for road calming measures and a potential bypass to redirect heavy traffic away from the village centre. Together, these actions will make it easier to get around the immediate local area.

Projects

- 2.1 Develop plans for the development of active travel and walking routes between Stonehouse and neighbouring villages and towns including Blackwood and Kirkmuirhill.
- 2.2 Explore ways to work with existing bus service providers and continue to lobby through Community Planning Partnership to change public transport routes, connecting Stonehouse to other key towns and villages within South Lanarkshire.
- 2.3 Acquire funding and commence work on the Stonehouse to Blackwood/Kirkmuirhill active travel route.
- 2.4 Campaign to promote road traffic safety by introducing traffic calming measures and a bypass directing heavy traffic away from the village.



Stonehouse will be a vibrant and exciting place, with plenty of opportunities for play and leisure locally.



Stonehouse has a slightly higher proportion of children and young people under 16 than the national average, and this figure is expected to grow as families continue moving into new housing developments in the village. The community has expressed a need for more play parks for children throughout the area, while young people have specifically requested dedicated outdoor spaces for socialising, with plans for a local bike track at Tileworks already in the early stages of development. Additionally, residents want access to leisure facilities in the village, including a gym and spaces for active classes, reflecting a broader interest in health and wellness as the community expands.

Projects

- 3.1 Acquire funding for and develop of a new play park at the top of the village, nearby Lifestyles, to accommodate demand from new housing developments.
- 3.2 Investigate the potential for a community gym in existing community-based facilities.
- 3.3 Increase the availability of active opportunities, including classes and groups for all ages and abilities, within the community.
- 3.4 Improve access to green spaces for leisure activities by developing a range of new walking routes suitable for different ability levels and families, including the River Avon walkways.
- 3.5 Deliver plans to develop a skate park and bike track for children and young people at the Tileworks Sports Ground.

Stonehouse will be an entrepreneurial place, which encourages and supports local business and retail.



Stonehouse envisions becoming a thriving entrepreneurial place by fostering a supportive environment for local businesses and retail. We are committed to enhancing infrastructure, providing tailored business support, and promoting a successful retail sector.

By encouraging innovation and creating an entrepreneurial culture, we aim to drive economic growth and community wealth, ensuring that the success of local businesses benefits the entire village.

Projects

- 4.1 Development of a support programme for local businesses looking to set up in Stonehouse, including start up grants, incentives and business development sites.
- 4.2 Provide additional sites for new and existing businesses (including workshop space) in the village and surrounding area.

Stonehouse will be a beautiful, semi-rural village which values and protects its own natural environment and green spaces, ensuring they are accessible to all.

Stonehouse is fortunate to have a beautiful rural environment that residents deeply value and want to protect. Local people want to see Stonehouse and its surrounding countryside well kept and maintained. Access to surrounding greenspace is also important to residents, and they want to see safe and accessible walking routes in and around the village, for all abilities including families with children. Additionally, there is strong local interest in expanding the infrastructure for electric vehicles by installing more EV charging points, reflecting a commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

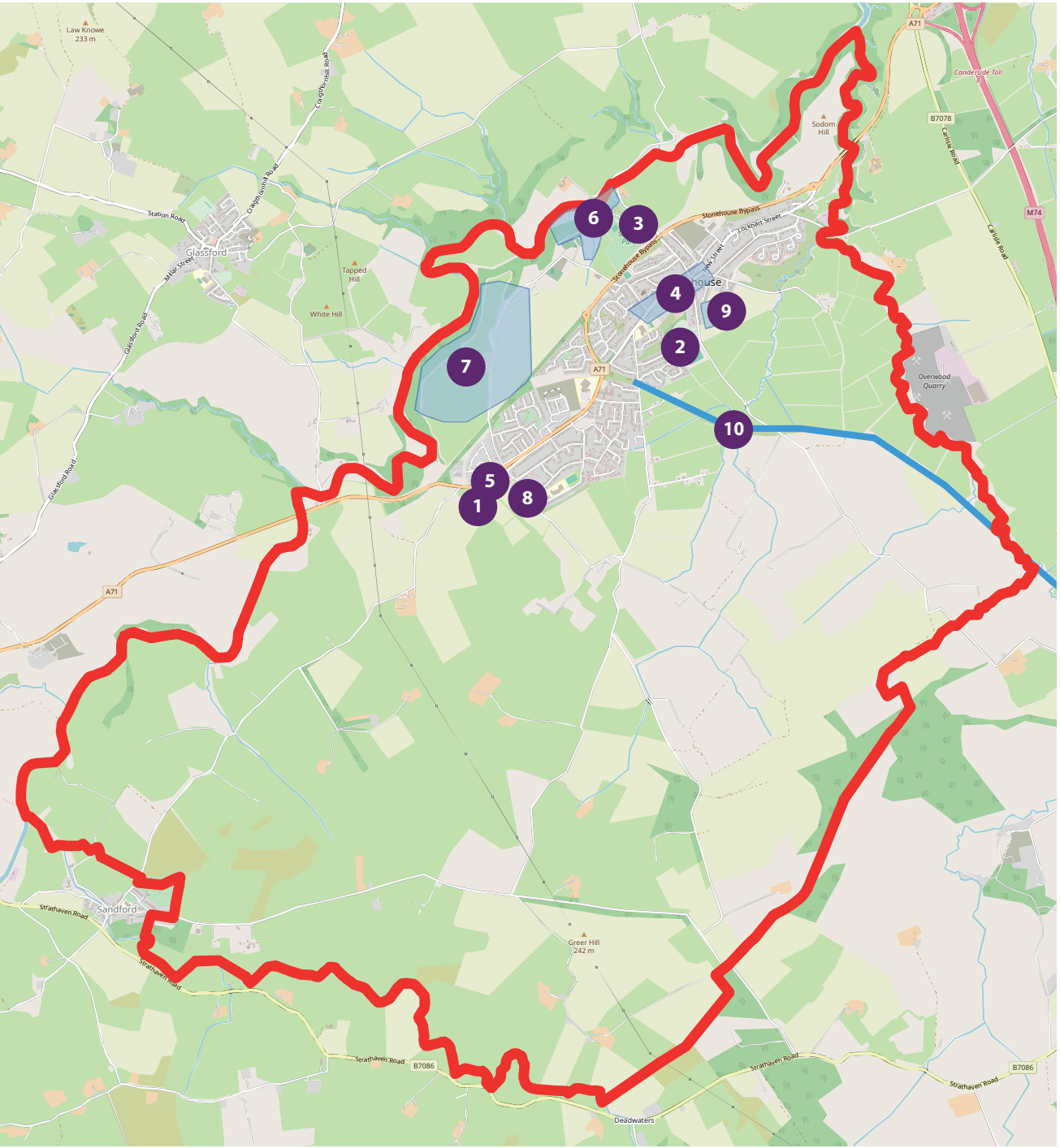
Projects

- 5.1 Establish local leadership and plans for action on litter, including a regular programme of community litter picks in partnership with local groups.
- 5.2 Update signage and right of way markers on local walking routes.
- 5.3 Explore the feasibility of the creation of a community garden and/or allotments in the Village.
- 5.4 Develop project plans and scope out partnerships for the development of new EV charging points at key community locations.
- 5.5 Provide ongoing support for continued and upgrades and maintenance of Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park, including the development of new paths and infrastructure.



4.2 Place Map

Map Ref	Location	Project Reference
1	Stonehouse Lifestyles	1.1
2	Tileworks	3.2, 3.6
3	Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park	5.5
4	Potential EV charging point 1	5.4
5	Potential EV charging point 2	5.4
6	Alexander Hamilton Local Nature Reserve	3.4
7	Mixed Use Development Site	1.4, 1.5, 2.4, 4.2
8	New Play Park	3.1
9	Community Growing Project Site	5.3
10	Proposed Active Travel Path to Blackwood	2.1





Development of the Plan

05

5.1 Stonehouse Community Council

Stonehouse Community Council has commissioned this plan. The Stonehouse Community Council area encompasses the village and surrounding rural areas reaching the edge of Strathaven and Sandford. Stonehouse Community Council is the lead organisation and client for this piece of work and is an eligible community body to submit a Local Place Plan to South Lanarkshire Council.

5.2 Overview

Our Place Plan has been community-led. The Place Plan has been developed using different engagement methods, all designed to ensure the widest representation of views from within the community. These are summarised below in section 5.3



5.3 Process

Our Place Plan was developed using a variety of different community engagement mechanisms, aimed at giving as many people as possible the opportunity to share their views.

Engaging with everyone in the local communities and villages is a critical part of any Local Place Plan. Community Enterprise carried out extensive and highly participative research from April- June 2024 to ensure there was plenty of opportunity to share views. The programme included time spent getting to know the area, encouraging engagement and building a presence in the community.

The aim of the research was to build up both a quantitative and qualitative picture of what local people think.

An outline of the methodology is as follows:

Demographics and statistics

A variety of different data sets have been pulled together to identify the specific nature of the target community using data from the most recent census, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and others.

Asset mapping exercise

The production of a map of the main assets across the village to understand the current level of provision. This is not an exhaustive list of every possible community space and activity, but an analysis of the most important ones. Community groups and organisations have also been grouped under main themes to understand where the gaps might be.

Community survey

This was undertaken to gather a broad range of community views about what people like and dislike about the area, and what people would like to see happen in the future.

- A campaign was launched in April 2024 with press releases through the Community Council and local group Facebook pages. Regular reminders were posted about the survey between April and June 2024.
- Posters were distributed throughout the village at key locations including public noticeboards, and at Lifestyles.
- A leaflet drop was conducted in early June to 500 of the newer houses in the village to boost survey responses.
- Paper copy surveys were made available on request and for collection at Stonehouse Lifestyles.
- As a result of the above efforts to raise awareness of the consultation, 148 people responded to the survey, representing the views of 553 people in total.

Community Consultation

Engagement more widely with the local community face to face was vital and a range of consultation methods were used to engage the wider community in consultation. Methods used were:

- Community Stall at Stonehouse Gala Day
- Open consultation session at Stonehouse Lifestyles
- Drop in at Stonehouse Senior Citizens
- Drop in at Mothers and Toddlers Group
- Survey conducted with all classes from Stonehouse Primary School and Newfield Primary, along with a focus group with the pupil council from Newfield Primary School.
- Focus group with pupils at Larkhall Academy who live in Stonehouse.
- Focus group with Stonehouse Girl Guides.

Stakeholder consultation

Key local stakeholders and partners were interviewed over the phone and at events. This was important to hear their thoughts on what's important to the community and to establish opportunities for partnership working in the future.

Local Authority Consultation

Key individuals working for South Lanarkshire Council were interviewed to gain an understanding of the strategic priorities for the area and how Stonehouse fits into South Lanarkshire Council strategy development.



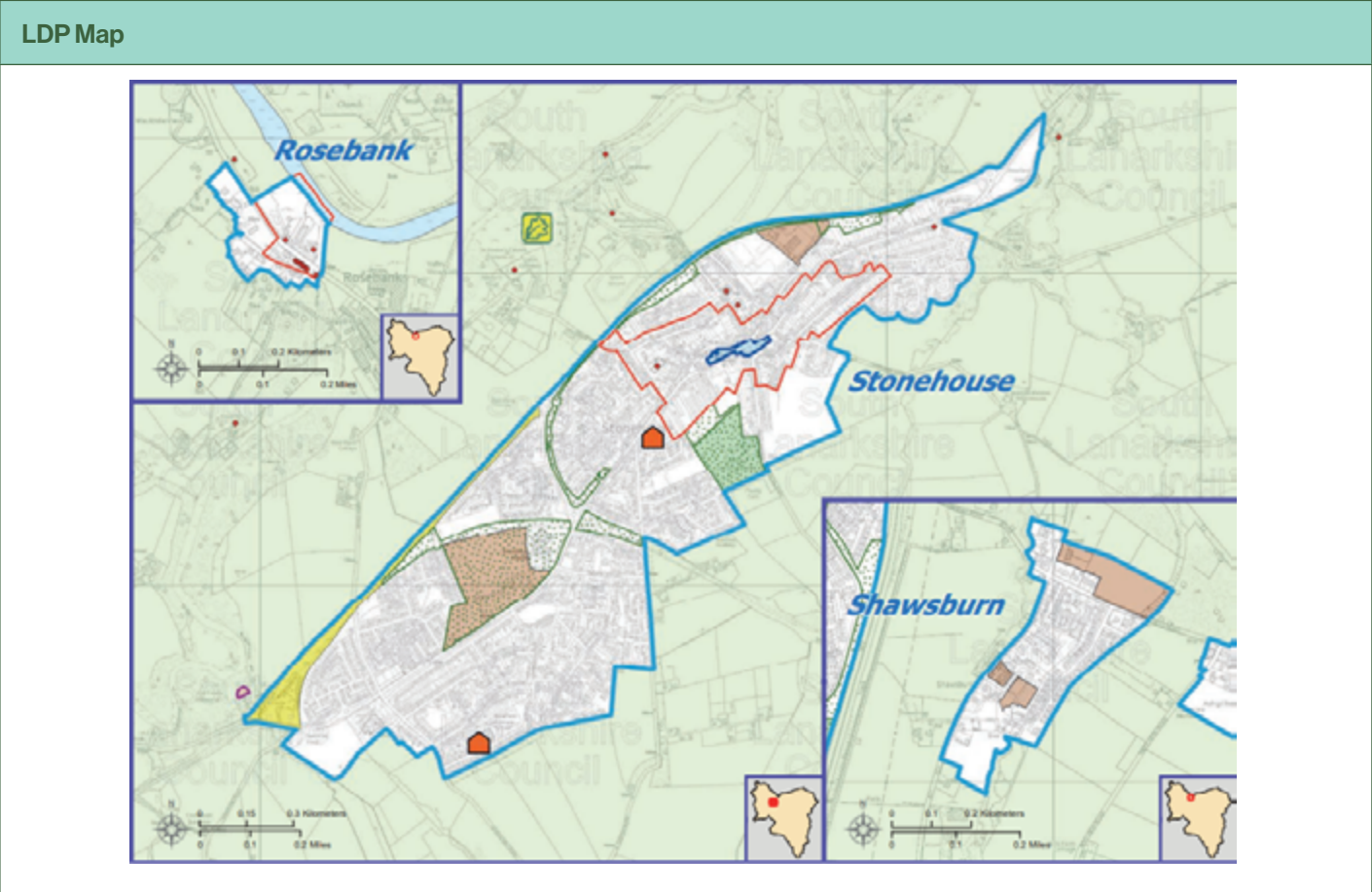
Strategic Alignment

06

We aim to have our local place plan registered by South Lanarkshire Council so that it will be taken into consideration during the preparation of Local Development Plan 3.

The preparation of our plan has been in the context of Local Development Plan 2 (Adopted) and reflects current planning objectives

Core Strategic Fit		
Key strategies	How we Have Considered these Plans and Strategies	
South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2	Regional Vision LDP2 seeks to ensure that future development takes place in a sustainable way and respects the distinctive and valued qualities of the area's natural and built environment. The plan also encourages economic growth and regeneration. The plan identifies four themes around which objectives have been structured: - Encouraging sustainable economic growth - Meet the communities needs - Enhance and safeguard the environment - Maximise the use of and seek opportunities to enhance existing infrastructure.	How it fits with Stonehouse area Our Local Place Plan has been thoughtfully crafted in alignment with the strategic priorities of LDP2. At the forefront is the commitment to sustainable growth, ensuring that as Stonehouse continues to develop and grow, the needs of the community are fully met. The plan also emphasises the significance of bolstering the local economy and supporting businesses to help them thrive. Central to our approach is the effective utilisation of existing assets, including local greenspaces and the surrounding rural environment, to enhance the quality of life for all residents.



National Planning Framework 4 ¹		
There are six overarching spatial principles: - Just transition. We will empower people to shape their places and ensure the transition to net zero is fair and inclusive. - Conserving and recycling assets. We will make productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure and services, locking in carbon, minimising waste, and building a circular economy. - Local living. We will support local liveability and improve community health and wellbeing by ensuring people can easily access services, greenspace, learning, work and leisure locally. - Compact urban growth. We will limit urban expansion so we can optimise the use of land to provide services and resources, including carbon storage, flood risk management, blue and green infrastructure and biodiversity. - Rebalanced development. We will target development to create opportunities for communities and investment in areas of past decline and manage development sustainably in areas of high demand. - Rural revitalisation. We will encourage sustainable development in rural areas, recognising the need to grow and support urban and rural communities together.		The Stonehouse Local Place Plan (LPP) establishes clear priorities and actions to implement the spatial principles outlined in NPF4. Through this plan, we aim to: - Maximize the use of existing buildings for the benefit of the community. - Transform vacant and underutilised plots, such as the proposed site for a community garden or allotments, into productive spaces. - Enhance local liveability by increasing the availability and accessibility of community assets. - Improve access to greenspaces and the surrounding rural areas, ensuring they are accessible to all residents. - Promote the sustainable development of Stonehouse as a growing semi-rural community. This plan is designed to ensure that Stonehouse thrives as a vibrant, well-connected, and sustainable place to live, work, and enjoy.

¹<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/>

Measuring Success

07

Theme 1 : Amenities, Facilities and Services

Stonehouse will be a desirable place to live with amenities, facilities and services for all.

Output	Outcome	Measurements
No of community groups hiring existing community facilities	Improved sense of community and belonging	Monitoring footfall at community facilities
No of vacant facilities brought back into use	Reduced social isolation	Regular community surveys conducted locally
No of affordable houses built	Improved access to community facilities	Scottish Household Survey
No of initiatives to improve town centre	Improved health and wellbeing	
	Increase in the number of families living in Stonehouse	
	Sustainable population growth	



Theme 2: Connectivity and Transport

Stonehouse will be a well-connected place with a range of transport options and safe roads for all..

Output	Outcome	Measurements
No of new walking paths created	Reduced reliance on car transport	Detailed project log for new walkways and paths
No of new cycle ways completed	Improved uptake of local public transport	Registry of all public transport routes, noting which routes have been re-established.
No of people using walks and cycle paths	Reduced emissions	Periodic surveys to gather data on local transport and connectivity links
No of local public transport routes re-established	Improved health and wellbeing	Automated counters at key entry and exit points of major routes (active travel path)
No of local public transport routes retained	Improved infrastructure	Use of GIS for mapping and tracking changes in infrastructure
	Improved liveability in a semi-rural location	
	Increased use of local outdoor spaces for recreation and commuting	

Theme 3: Leisure and Play

Stonehouse will be a vibrant and exciting place, with plenty of opportunities for play and leisure locally.

Output	Outcome	Measurements
No of play facilities locally	Improved health and wellbeing	Regular community surveys
No of families with access to play facilities within 20 min walk from their home	Reduced social isolation	Monitoring at specific venues
No of leisure facilities	Increased availability of local facilities and amenities	Monitoring uptake of active opportunities
No of active opportunities available	Improved liveability	
No of people accessing local greenspace for leisure and exercise.	Increased number of people spending time outdoors	



Stonehouse Local Place Plan

Theme 4: Business and Enterprise

Stonehouse will be an entrepreneurial place, which encourages and supports local business and retail.

Output	Outcome	Measurements
No of existing local businesses supported No of new businesses supported No of businesses provided with facilities/space No of retail and food outlets	Improved and diversified local economy Increased resilience and growth of existing local businesses Growth in entrepreneurship Enhanced capacity for local businesses to operate and expand Improved access to goods and services	Changes in the revenue of supported businesses before and after support Surveys with business owners to gauge satisfaction with the support provided and their perceived impact on business performance Track the number of new business registrations in the area over time and their survival rate over time (1-3 years) Occupancy rates of new business units or workspaces

Theme 5: Environment and Greenspace

Stonehouse will be a beautiful, rural village which values and protects its own natural environment and green spaces.

Output	Outcome	Measurements
No of local anti-litter initiatives/projects No of trails, paths and routes No of people using local trails, paths and routes No of new growing spaces developed No of new EV community charge points developed	Reduced littering and improved cleanliness of public spaces Improved access to and use of outdoor recreational spaces Enhanced community engagement in local food production Increased adoption of electric vehicles and reduced local carbon emissions	Surveys to assess changes in public perception regarding the cleanliness of the area Keep records of number of people and organisations involved in community growing spaces Frequency of use and number of individual users of EV charging points



Management and Governance

08

8.1 Management and Monitoring

Stonehouse Community Council will be the lead body to retain a watching brief over the implementation of the plan. This includes ensuring that South Lanarkshire Council responsibilities are undertaken and supporting the delivery of projects the community and local agencies are responsible for.

The Community Council will oversee the success of the plan but will also be responsible for reviewing it periodically to respond to changes in the local environment, many of which we will not be able to envisage just now. We want the plan to be clear and agreed but there may be opportunities that emerge that will require the leadership of local community groups, encouraging on-going community involvement, volunteering and activism.

Project Sub-groups

Time limited, project specific sub-groups comprising community groups or interested individuals will be established by Stonehouse Community Council. These will operate while substantial projects are running. Sub-groups will have their own Chair and include at least one Community Council Member.

Stonehouse Community Council will

1. Keep the plan up to date and amend it where required.
2. Liaise with South Lanarkshire Council about planning related implementation.
3. Stimulate /support organisations to take on the actions identified in the Plan.
4. Promote the Plan.
5. Review progress.
6. Monitor the impact of the Local Place Plan potentially through (commissioning) external impact assessors.

Appendices

Appendix 1: About Our Place

In 2022, there were 2,725 dwellings in Stonehouse, 98% are occupied and 1.7% are vacant (46 properties). The Stonehouse population has grown by 9% between 2001 and 2021, which is higher than the average South Lanarkshire population growth (+6%) and slightly higher than the national average for population growth (+8%).

The demographic profile of Stonehouse is similar to the South Lanarkshire and Scottish averages, with a slightly (+1%) higher proportion of children and young people aged 0-16 than regional and national averages.

Employment and Income

- Numbers of people claiming Universal Credit who are both employed and unemployed in Stonehouse are roughly in line with South Lanarkshire averages, which sit slightly above the national average.
- 24% of children live in families with a relative low income, which is in line with the South Lanarkshire average.

Education

- While pupil attainment in some categories (Primary School pupils' literacy and high school pupils receiving awards of SCQF 6 or higher), overall the number of school leavers from Stonehouse going on to positive destinations within 3 months of leaving school sits at 98%.

Transport

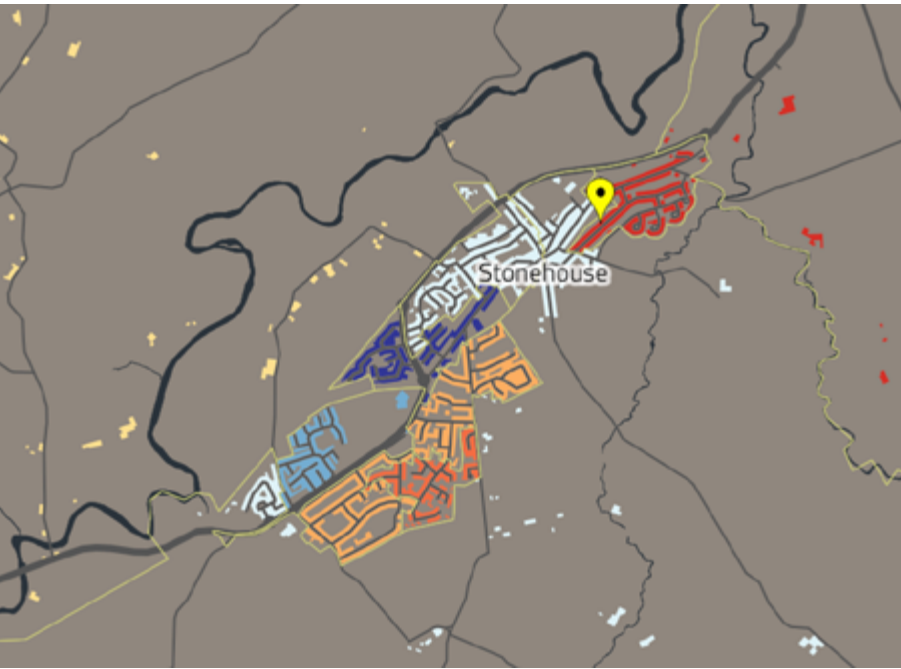
- 21% of households in Stonehouse do not own a car, while this is below the regional and national averages, it is statistically significant given the rural nature of the place indicating an increased reliance on public transport.

Housing and Property

- Stonehouse is a relatively affordable place to live, with 30% of properties in the most affordable council tax band, which is 10% higher than the national average. The mean price of homes in Stonehouse in 2022 was £152,180, which is lower than the South Lanarkshire average of £188,414.
- NRS data from 2017 shows that around half (47%) of residential properties in Stonehouse are either detached or semi-detached houses. 40% are terraced properties and 13% are flats.
- 19% of properties in Stonehouse are socially rented. In 2022/2023, there were 407 council stock properties in Stonehouse.
- In August 2023, there were 89 commercial properties in Stonehouse, no new nondomestic properties were built last year.

SIMD 2020

As shown in the SIMD 2020 map below, Stonehouse is an area of mixed deprivation. At the top of the village, the area shaded in red falls into the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland and the centre of the Village includes a data zone in the 10% least deprived areas in Scotland



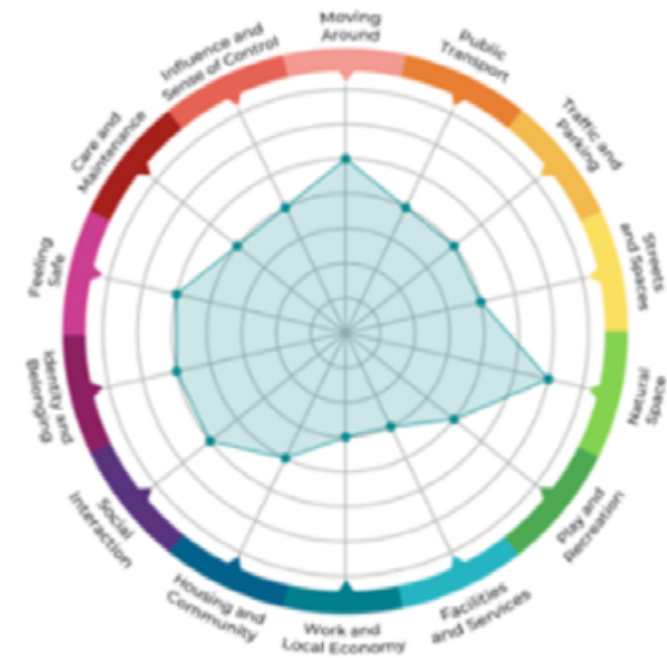
Appendix 2: Summary of Community Consultation

Place Standard Assessment

The people of Stonehouse have embraced the Village Plan as a chance to change the area for the better. Phase 1 of the development of the Stonehouse Village Plan (and subsequent LPP) was to undertake robust engagement practices and engage people from across the community. This phase helped to identify issues, ideas, and possible solutions.

The consultation was structured using the Place Standard tool, which provides a simple framework to understand all elements of place in a methodical way and pinpoint key areas of strength and areas for improvement. The community survey was used as a key tool to assess the different categories. Respondents were asked to rate Stonehouse from 1 to 7 (1 being very poor and 7 being excellent) on the seven Place Standard indicators. As shown in the results below, **natural space** rated highest with an average score of 6 out of 7.

This was followed by **moving around, social interaction, identity and belonging** which were all rated a 5 out of 7. The lowest scoring categories were **facilities and services, and employment/local economy** which were both rated as poor with an average score of 3 out of 7. The image below visualises this assessment.



To summarise the feedback from the community provided throughout the consultation process, a summary of feedback has been included below:

72% of survey respondents rated Stonehouse as either a good or very good place to live

- The number one positive thing which was mentioned across all consultations, including the online survey and face to face events was the **community spirit**. People feel that Stonehouse is a friendly and welcoming place where locals look out for and support one another. There are a wide variety of community groups who want to help make life better for the people who live in the village. 61% of survey respondents highlighted community spirit as a key asset in their response.
- People also value the **rural nature of the community and the feeling that they have the countryside on their doorstep** living in Stonehouse. Stonehouse retains it's sense of being a small village, but is located near to other towns and is within easy access of urban areas.
- The local walks** in and around Stonehouse are important to local people, providing opportunities to get outside and enjoy the surrounding countryside.
- Parks and greenspace** in Stonehouse are a highly valued assets, particularly the Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park. Local people would like to see this developed further and maintained and preserved as an important community asset.
- Stonehouse is **well connected to the motorway network**, easy access to the M74 makes it an ideal place for those who commute to other towns and cities for work.

Challenges

Lack of local amenities; shops in the town centre and places to eat and drink locally. Lack of options mean that most people are driving to other towns to do their shopping and socialising. There are limited opportunities to spend locally and support the local economy.

Lack of affordable community facilities; LifeStyles was opened in 2011 as the main community facility for Stonehouse, however many individuals and groups noted that the hire prices prevent them from using the facility. It is not well used by the community in general. There is a sense that more community and social spaces are needed in Stonehouse.

General upkeep of the village including general maintenance and upkeep of the village centre.

Public transport; while new links to Glasgow are valued, internal public transport connections within South Lanarkshire are considered to be poor. As Stonehouse is a rural community, where 21% of households do not own a car, public transport links are vital to local people and the economy.

Parks and play areas; the Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park is a well-loved community asset, but many people would like to see new play parks near LifeStyles to accommodate new build housing and village expansion. The TileWorks sports ground is currently closed, pending Community Asset Transfer to Royal Albert FC, when it is intended to reopen as a facility for sports and recreation. Parks, outdoor leisure and play areas were a priority in the survey and was frequently mentioned during face-to-face consultations. 33% of survey respondents rated Stonehouse poorly as a 'place to play'.

Paths and walks; local people love the countryside around Stonehouse but would like to see more safe walking routes locally, making the most of the greenspace that surrounds the village. They would also like to see active travel routes linking the village to nearby towns and villages including Strathaven and Blackwood.

Services; the need for a new high school for Stonehouse grows as new houses are built in the area, the lack of high school was mentioned frequently during consultations, alongside the need to improve local health services in the village.



A full policy analysis was undertaken to consider Stonehouse’s Village Plan alignment and contribution to key local and national policy. The following policies and strategies are of particular relevance to the development of this plan:

Scottish Government - National Performance Framework

NPF provides a national context for place and is Scotland's wellbeing framework. The framework sets out a series of outcomes that reflect the values and aspirations of the people of Scotland. Each of these Outcomes is designed to help reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress.

The NFP is closely linked to the Place Principle, which supports the National Performance Framework’s collective purpose for Scotland and helps communities to apply it to local communities. Aspects of the NFP and associated outcomes that are relevant to the Stonehouse Village Plan have been summarised below:

Outcome	Link to Stonehouse Village Plan
Communities: • Are pleasant places to live where people have access to warm, efficient and affordable homes. • We have high quality, affordable and accessible public services and facilities that positively enhance lives. We focus our investment on deprived communities and disadvantaged rural areas. • Are friendly, vibrant and cohesive. • Older people are happy and fulfilled and no one is isolated, lonely, living in poor housing or living in poverty.	Our village plan sets out actions and projects to address all of these areas. By delivering our actions we will: • Improve access to green space • Help to increase the number of assets in community ownership • Decrease the proportion of adults who report feeling lonely by ensuring the community has access to social and community spaces to come together. • On the whole, the set of actions put forward in this plan will help to make the Stonehouse community a better place to live.
Economy: Our economy is inclusive and focused on improving the lives of all our people. The benefits of economic growth, wealth and opportunities are fairly shared.	This Plan sets out steps to help boost and improve our local economy to support local people to set up and find premises for their own businesses and improve the amount of local spending.
Environment: We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment by enhancing and protecting our natural assets and heritage. We ensure all communities can engage with and benefit from nature and green space. We promote high quality, sustainable planning, design and housing. Our transport infrastructure is integrated, sustainable, efficient and reliable. We promote active travel, cycling and walking, and discourage car reliance and use particularly in towns and cities.	This plan sets out a number of project to help enhance the communities access to surrounding greenspace by introducing new walkways and signposting existing ones. The plan also sets out a long term ambition to create active travel paths connecting Stonehouse to neighbouring communities to reduce reliance on cars. We will campaign to improve the network of public transport options locally, working alongside partners.
Fair work and Business: We have thriving and innovative businesses with quality jobs and fair work for everyone. We successfully attract and retain new talent and fully support business and social enterprise.	This plan sets out steps to increase the number of local businesses in Stonehouse.

Health: We are healthy and active.	One of the key themes in this plan is to improve the availability of local leisure options for all age groups, which will help keep our community healthy and active.
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The Place Principle

The Place Principle is the overarching context for place based working in Scotland. The Scottish Government and COSLA adopted the Place Principle in 2019 to help overcome organisational and sectoral boundaries, to encourage better collaboration and community involvement, and improve the impact of combined energy, resources and investment.

Developed by partners in the public and private sectors, the third sector and communities, the Place Principle helps establish a clear vision for collaboration around place. It promotes a shared understanding of place, and the need to take a more collaborative approach to a place's services and assets to achieve better outcomes for people and communities. The principle encourages and enables local flexibility to respond to issues and circumstances in different places. It helps partners and local communities unlock the National Performance Framework and make it applicable to where and how they live and work.

The Place Principle recognises that:

- Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose, and is at the heart of addressing the needs and realising the full potential of communities.
- Places are shaped by the way resources, services and assets are directed and used by the people who live in and invest in them
- a more joined-up, collaborative, and participative approach to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enables better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives.

Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 sets the future structure of the modernised planning system. The Act includes a broad range of changes to be made across the planning system including:

- Arrangements for the preparation of development plans
- Proactive master planning
- Development management procedures and considerations
- Strengthening enforcement
- A focus on improved performance and positive outcomes

An important part of the legislation is the introduction of local place plans. Local Place Plans are community-led plans setting out proposals for the development and use of land. Once completed and then registered by the planning authority, they are to be taken into account in the preparation of the relevant local development plan.

National Planning Framework 4

The National Planning Framework sets out the Scottish Ministers' policies and proposals for the development and use of land. NPF4 was adopted by the Scottish Ministers in February 2023. The statutory development plan for any given area of Scotland consists of the National Planning Framework and the relevant local development plan.

There are six overarching spatial principles:

- Just transition.
- Conserving and recycling assets.
- Local living.
- Compact urban growth.
- Rebalanced development.
- Rural revitalisation.

By applying these spatial principles, the national spatial strategy will support the planning and delivery of:

- sustainable places, where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity;
- liveable places, where we can all live better, healthier lives; and
- productive places, where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy.



Afterword

Local Policy Context

South Lanarkshire Council Plan (Connect) 2022-2027

This plan sets out how the council will deliver its services and take action on the things that matter to residents, with the overall objective of improving the lives and prospects of those who live in South Lanarkshire. Priorities set out in this plan include:

- **Putting people first and reducing inequality;** working with communities to ensure their voices are heard and that they are supported to take action on the things that matter to them.
- **Recovery, progression and improvement;** including continued recovery from the pandemic, and progression in terms of delivering the right things that matter to everyone, in the right place, at the right time.
- **Planet;** working towards a sustainable future in sustainable places, working together to develop local solutions to protect nature and take action on climate change-supporting our young people to lead the way.

The people of Stonehouse are proud that we are at the forefront of Local Place Plans in South Lanarkshire, influencing the next Local Development Plan of South Lanarkshire Council and influencing decisions about the land and assets that are important to us.

We want to thank the residents, businesses and organisations of Stonehouse who gave their time and ideas. We want to particularly thank the steering group of the Community Council who supported throughout the process and the community organisations and groups who helped to facilitate the community consultation.

Keep an eye on the Stonehouse Community Council website for more developments.
<https://www.stonehousecommunitycouncil.co.uk/>

And if you want to contact us directly, just email:
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The Local Place Plan Steering Group

